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BY RW NARA DATE 6-24-10

A U.S. POLITICAL/MILITARY STRATEGY FOR NICARAGUA

This strategy is based upon certain assumptions which are crucial to the success of United States' effort in Central America:

- The American people currently consider U.S. full-scale military involvement in Nicaragua as unacceptable. Public acceptance of a U.S. invasion of Nicaragua could change dramatically should the Sandinista military invade either Honduras or Costa Rica.
- Public support of current U.S. policy in Central America is rapidly growing. Support of U.S. policy among the Nicaraguans is also shifting to one of cautious but visibly growing support. The U.S. Congress will vote for some level of aid which combined with the current and significant foreign and domestic support will allow the proposed strategy to be implemented.
- The FDN and UNO are consolidating politically and support the forces led by Enrique Bermudez in Nicaragua and his forces and allied forces in the border areas of Honduras and Costa Rica.
- The support of the FDN and the U.S. effort in Central America by the Honduran Government is very tentative; although the Honduran Government is supportive, in principle, the soon to be elections temper overt Honduran Government action. Colonel Gonzales (Chief of Staff of the Honduran Military) made this quite clear to the undersigned on July 15, 1985.
- Support for the Sandinista Government by the Nicaraguan people is eroding rapidly.
- The Soviets/Cubans will not implement the Brezhnev Doctrine should the U.S. undertake military action in Nicaragua nor will the Soviets/Cubans intervene militarily to block the overthrow of the Sandinistas by UNO/FDN forces.
- The global psychological warfare conducted by the Sandinistas will continue unabated.
- Intelligence, both tactical and strategic, will continue to improve. (The FDN will receive U.S. intelligence support.)
- A comprehensive UNO/FDN political program will be developed and widely publicized throughout the U.S., Nicaragua, and the world immediately.

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This strategy is divided into three phases. The first phase consists primarily of a continuation of the efforts already in progress with the following objectives:

Phase I.

- (1) Development of a sound FDN logistics support base in Honduras.
- (2) Development of an FDN operational base in Nicaragua so that support (log) distances can be reduced and FDN troop presence in Honduras is reduced.
- (3) Development of a secondary Costa Rican front with bases and operations removed as much as possible from Costa Rican territory.
- (4) Establishment of an aerial resupply system for both fronts.
- (5) Immediate coordination between the two fronts (northern and southern).
- (6) Near term FDN urban guerrilla capability to demonstrate an active FDN presence in the urban centers.
- (7) Enhanced communications and intelligence (C³I) to exploit FDN capabilities.
- (8) CI capability to thwart Sandinista penetration efforts of the FDN and UNO operations.
- (9) Development of a robust FDN psychological warfare capability.
- (10) Development of a polad/military advisory group (2-3 people) to ensure FDN maximizes political/military coordination with both the U.S. Government, private sector, Honduran/Costa Rican Governments, etc.

Phase II. This is the offensive phase of the strategy and would have the following objectives:

- (1) To repeatedly but temporarily disrupt the economic infrastructure of Nicaragua with priority to the electrical grid, water, transportation, and communications systems. (A show of force action with maximum psychological benefit.)

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Phase II (continued)...

- (2) To establish a strong political presence in the urban centers focusing on graffiti, leaflets, selective targetting of known FSLN population control groups, i.e., block wardens.
- (3) To attack the regular Sandinista security forces to force them into a defensive posture (avoiding as possible the unproductive engagements with the BLI).
- (4) To treat the Nicaraguan people much better than the Sandinista forces.
- (5) To destroy the legitimacy of the Sandinista Government.
- (6) To control more and more of the country by gradually and systematically replacing the Sandinista control with UNO/FDN control.
- (7) To separate the foreign advisors from the Nicaraguan people and isolate these groups (both militarily and psychologically).
- (8) To destroy the main armaments of the Sandinistas, priority directed to the armed helicopters, aircraft, tanks, armored personnel carriers, artillery and transportation plus C³I.

Phase III. The third and final phase would have the following objectives:

- (1) The defeat and demobilization of Sandinista armed forces.
- (2) Implementation of the UNO/FDN political program.
- (3) Repatriation of all foreign advisors and foreign supporters (to include the Sandinista (SIC) Americans).
- (4) Identification and defranchizing (SIC) of residual Somoza supporters (people in prison a special problem).
- (5) Immediate implementation of U.S. and foreign economic aid, social assistance (judicial system), and military assistance to establish professional, non-political (armed forces should be greatly and immediately reduced and armed forces placed under civilian control).

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